

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L NATO 04805

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE, XH, UK, CZ
SUBJECT: CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIAL'S COMMENTS
ON BELGRADE PREPARATORY MEETING

REF: PRAGUE 1164 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: THE UK DELEGATION HAS CIRCULATED THE FOLLOWING
REPORT ON CSCE DISCUSSIONS IN LONDON WITH A CZECHOSLOVAK
OFFICIAL IN WHICH THE LATTER TOOK A NOTABLY TOUGH LINE IN
FAVOR OF INCLUSION OF POLITICAL SUBSTANCE IN THE BELGRADE
PREPARATORY MEETING. IN PARTICULAR, THE CZECHSOLOVAK
STRESSED THAT DISCUSSION OF THE AGENDA AT BELGRADE WOULD
HAVE TO INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF ALL THE NEW PROPOSALS WHICH
ANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS WISHED TO PUT FORWARD. END SUMMARY.
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BEGIN TEXT:

1. DURING OFFICIAL TALKS IN LONDON ON 2 MAY, AN OFFICIAL
OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR.OPRSAL
EXPRESSED THE FOLLOWING VIEWS.

2. MR. OPRSAI STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF REACHING AGREEMENT, AT THE PREPARATORY MEETING, ON A "POLITICAL CONCEPT" FOR THE MAIN MEETING. HE INDICATED THAT SUITABLE INGREDIENTS FOR SUCH A "CONCEPT" WOULD INCLUDE, FOR EXAMPLE, AGREEMENT BY ALL PARTICIPANTS TO ABSTAIN FROM POLEMICS AT THE MEETING. HE AGREED THAT THIS APPROACH IMPLIED THAT THE PREPARATORY MEETING WOULD HAVE TO ADDRESS ITSELF TO MATTERS OF POLITICAL SUBSTANCE RATHER THAN SIMPLY TO PROCEDURAL ISSUES; AND THAT, IN CONSEQUENCE, IT COULD BY NO MEANS BE REGARDED AS CERTAIN THAT THE PREPARATORY MEETING COULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN SIX WEEKS AS THE WEST HOPED.

3. MR. OPRSAI ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT, IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK VIEW, DISCUSSION OF THE AGENDA IN THE PREPARATORY MEETING WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF ALL THE NEW PROPOSALS WHICH ANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS WISHED TO PUT FORWARD. THIS MEANT THAT CONSENSUS WOULD HAVE TO BE REACHED ON THE SUITABILITY OF EACH NEW PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION IN THE MAIN MEETING'S AGENDA. HE REJECTED ARGUMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT THIS APPROACH WOULD TRANSFER FROM THE MAIN MEETING TO THE PREPARATORY MEETING IMPORTANT MATTERS OF POLITICAL SUBSTANCE WITH WHICH IT HAD NO MANDATE, IN THE FINAL ACT, TO DEAL.

4. MR. OPRSAI ARGUED STRONGLY FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY IN THE DISCUSSION OF NEW PROPOSALS. IF, FOR EXAMPLE, THE WEST WISHED TO INTRODUCE NEW PROPOSALS IN THE FIELD OF CBMS, THIS COULD ONLY BE DONE ON THE BASIS

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THAT--SINCE CBMS RESULTED FROM A WESTERN INITIATIVE--THE EAST HAD A RECIPROCAL RIGHT TO INTRODUCE NEW PROPOSALS ON, FOR EXAMPLE, THE NON-FIRST USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. SUCH AN APPROACH WAS ESSENTIAL IF THE AGENDA FOR THE MAIN MEETING WAS TO HAVE A "SUITABLY BALANCED CHARACTER".

5. MR. OPRSAI ALSO ARGUED STRONGLY AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "COORDINATING COMMITTEE" FOR THE MAIN MEETING IN BELGRADE. HE SAID THAT THE ELEMENT OF PUBLICITY WOULD BE CRUCIAL IN DETERMINING THE HEALTH OR OTHERWISE OF THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE REVIEW MEETING; AND THAT A PLENARY OR COORDINATING COMMITTEE COULD PLAY AN UNHELPFUL ROLE IN THIS REGARD. THE IMPLICATION OF MR. OPRSAI'S APPROACH WAS THAT ALL THE MAIN MEETING DELIBERATIONS SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN SPECIALIST COMMISSIONS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

END TEXT. BENNETT

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